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## RAILROADS PASS INTO POSSESSION OF GOVERNMENT

Task of Operating Them Delegated to Railroads' War Board for Present.

FIVE LEADING EXECUTIVES CALLED INTO CONFERENCE

McAdoo Issues His First Formal Order, Designed to Speed Up Freight Movements.

TO USE MOST DIRECT ROUTES

Immediate Measures Expected to Remove Some of Obstacles Delaying Shipments.

(By Associated Press.)  
WASHINGTON, December 28.—The railroads of the United States passed into government possession at noon today as Secretary McAdoo, designated by President Wilson as director-general of railroads, was delegating to the railroads' war board the task of operating them for the present.

The war board, comprising five of the country's foremost railroad executives who have been in supreme charge of the roads for the last nine months, was called into conference at 11 o'clock to discuss plans for wedding all transportation lines into a single government-operated system. They left the Treasury Department two hours later under instructions to continue their functions, and submit immediately a plan of operation to the director-general. The executives who are to work out the plans for wedding 250,000 miles of railroad into one great continental system for winning the war, are as follows:

Fairfax Harrison, president of the Southern.  
Julius Kruttschnitt, chairman of the board of the Southern Pacific.  
Samuel Roca, president of the Pennsylvania.  
Hale Holden, president of the Burlington.

Howard Elliott, of the New Haven.  
To-night Mr. McAdoo issued his first formal order, designed to speed up freight movements, telegraphing all railroad presidents and directors instructions to move traffic by the most convenient and direct routes. At the same time he ordered them to continue operation of their lines in conformity with the President's proclamation putting them under government control.

NO INDICATION AS TO ATTITUDE TOWARD WAR BOARD

There was no indication to-night whether Mr. McAdoo intended eventually to displace the war board with an organization of his own, or to continue its organization for the duration of the war. It was made clear, however, that it will continue to function until the director-general decides that a better system can be devised.

The order that freight move by the most expeditious routes opens the way for a pooling of traffic impossible heretofore by reason of statutes designed to prevent the practice by carriers operated under private direction. It takes from the shipper the right to route his freight as he wishes, and leaves to the railroad traffic manager the task of sending it most directly and where there is least congestion. The order follows:

"Having assumed the duties imposed upon me by and in pursuance of the proclamation of the President, dated December 26, 1917, you will, until otherwise ordered, continue the operation of your road in conformity with said proclamation. You are requested to make every possible effort to increase efficiency and to move traffic by the most convenient and expeditious routes. I confidently count on your hearty co-operation. It is only through united effort, unselfish service and effective work that this war can be won and America's future be secured."

Although Mr. McAdoo does not believe a complete unification of all rail systems can be brought about overnight, even with legal restrictions lifted, he fully expects measures taken under government control will remove some of the obstacles that now prevent the rapid movement of freight. Members of the war board were requested to study the situation and report on any measures to relieve congestion they think might wisely be put into force.

NO PLANS FOR STAFF BY DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Thus far, the director-general has made no plans for a staff. He asked the war board to-day for a complete chart of its organization, which was furnished to-night.

In drafting into service the war board organization, the director-general takes over the services of all the board's committees, including the operating committee of Eastern roads, headed by A. W. Thompson, of the Baltimore and Ohio. He obtains the services as well of the board's service commission, which now is assisting the Interstate Commerce Commission in distributing cars.

Pooling of railroad equipment, already started by the war board, will be made of terminal facilities, and Mr. McAdoo asked the war board to-day for a special report on terminal facilities and the extent to which they may be pooled.

An early measure to relieve congestion, it was intimated to-night, will be a denial of transportation to non-essential commodities. Traffic that is

## Private Ginger Saves Platoon Commander, but Refuses the V.C.

Story Told in Dugout Shows How Man Comes Through Melting Pot.

By ARTHUR GUY EMPEY, Author of "Over the Top," "What Call," "Etc., Who Has Had Many Thrillers "Over There."

[The sixth of a series of twelve articles by the author of "Over the Top," the best seller of the year. The remaining articles will tell Mr. Empey's experiences during his seventeen months in the first-line trenches of the British army in France, the thrilling "great adventures" which hundreds of thousands of young Americans are soon to pass through.]

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There were six of us. "Curly" Wallace was called "Curly" because he had the cutest little Della Fox, or spit curl, as the gun clerks call it, you ever saw. Wallace was proud of that curl, and gave it the best of attention and care. He was Scotch.

"Happy" Houghton earned his nickname by his constant smile and happy disposition. He was English, a Londoner. "Hungry" Foxcroft really earned his title. He took special pains that our rations would not be made milder by lying around too long in the dampness of our dugout. He was English; also from London.

"Ikey" Hunney, dubbed "Ikey" because in one of our theatrical attempts he took the part of "Ikey Cohenstein," and made quite a hit. English, via London.

"Dick" Turpin, called "Dick" in memory of the notorious highwayman. He used to help the quartermaster-sergeant, on the name was very appropriate. He was Irish, from Dublin. I was the sixth. The boss put the prefix "Yank" to my name, because I was American, and hailed from the "Big Town" behind the Statue of Liberty.

Six in Gun Crew.

The six of us composed the crew of gun No. 2 of the —th Brigade Machine Company. We were machine gunners, and our gun was the Vickers light, 303, watercooled.

It was a rainy afternoon in June, and we were sitting in our dugout in the front-line trench, about 200 yards from the German lines.

If you should ask a Tommy Atkins "What is a dugout?" he would look at you in astonishment, and pitying you for your apparent lack of education, would answer: "What's a dugout? Why, a dugout is a—well, a dugout's a dugout." Only being a Tommy pro-tem in my case meaning "for duration of war"—I will try to describe to you the best of my ability this particular dugout.

A dugout is a hole in the ground. Gets its name because it is dug out by the Royal Engineers, or R. E.s, as we call them. It is used to shelter the men in the trenches from shell fire. They also sleep in it, or try to. From our point of view, its main use is to drain the trenches of muddy water, and give us rheumatism. It also makes a good hotel for rats. These guests look upon us as intruders, and complain that we overcrowd the place. Occasionally we give in to them, and take a turn in the trench to rest ourselves.

Air Shaft Through Ceiling.

Our dugout was about twenty feet deep, or, at least, there were twenty wooden steps leading down to it. The ceiling and walls were braced by heavy, square-cut timbers. Over the timbers in the ceiling sheets of corrugated iron were spread to keep the wet earth from falling in on us. The entrance was heavily sandbagged, and very narrow; there was only room for one person to leave or enter at a time. The ceiling was six feet high, and the floor space was ten feet by six feet. Through the ceiling a six-inch square air shaft was cut. We used to take turns sleeping under this in wet weather.

The timbers bracing the walls were driven full of nails to hang our equipment on. After our ammunition, belt-bulldozing machine, equipment, rifles, etc., had been stowed away, there was not much space for six men to live, not forgetting the rats.

It was very dark in the dugout, and, as we were on candles and in the half every twenty-four hours, we had to economize on light. We wrote the last man who left the candle burning.

In this hotel of ours we would sit around the lonely candle, and, through a thick haze of tobacco smoke, would recount our different experiences at various points of the line where we had been, or spin yarns about home. Sometimes we would write a letter, when we were fortunate enough to be near the candle. At other times we'd sit for an hour without saying a word, listening to a German over in the enemy's front trench playing a cornet. My, how that Boche could play! Just to make us hate the war, he'd play "Swanee River," "Home, Sweet Home" or "Over the Waves." The latter was my favorite. During his recital our trenches were strangely quiet. Never a shot from either side.

Hate That Harmonica.

Sometimes, when he had finished, Ikey Hunney would go into the trench and play on his harmonica. As soon as we'd see that harmonica over in the Germans would be sure, when the first strains reached them, to send over "five rounds rapid." We hated that harmonica. More than once we checked

## America's War Aims Already Disclosed

(By Associated Press.)

WASHINGTON, December 28.—America's war aims are regarded by the administration as having sufficiently disclosed in President Wilson's reply to the Pope's last peace proposal and in his recent message to Congress. Consequently, unless there are further developments in the peace and propaganda front by the Germans and Austrians through their negotiations with the Russian Bolsheviks there is no intention on the part of the United States government of attempting to elaborate or expand the statements of America's purpose laid down in those documents.

It is fully understood in Washington that there may be internal reasons in certain countries for making some concessions to certain powerful political elements which are pressing for another statement of the entire war aims. These considerations will be weighed and acted upon in the discretion of the governments of those countries.

The decision involved is regarded as of great importance, because of the possibility that divergent statements might afford the German plotters opportunity to weaken the ties that bind the allies together.

## DR. JOHNSON EXPECTED TO MAKE STATEMENT

May Tell Frankly of His Relations With His Wife and Other Women.

MANY CHARGES ARE FALSE

Dentist Accused of Wife Murder Tells Detectives He Would Like to Issue a Public Statement Which Would Clear Up Whole Matter.

Weakening from day to day by disclosures which point to him as the one who poisoned his wife, Alice Knight Johnson, it was stated as the opinion of Sergeant Detectives Willy and Smith that Dr. Samuel J. Johnson, now in the City Jail, charged with the murder, would doubtless make a statement to-day touching his relation to the case.

The uncovering of the purchase of cyanide of potassium by him at the drug store of Gordon Blair, 525 East Broad Street, was the closing circumstance which leads Sergeant Willy to believe that he will not hold up longer. In a talk with the prisoner yesterday, he stated to the detective that many false charges had been made against him, and that he wanted to make a statement clearing up the entire matter. He added, however, that he must wait for the advice of his counsel.

Sergeant Smith stated last night that Dr. Johnson expected a letter from Attorney John E. Woodward, of Wilson, which he might receive to-day, and out of which he might receive the advice relative to a statement.

Just whether any such statement will be made is a matter of grave doubt, for it is believed that it would jeopardize the hope of the young dentist to free himself from the web of circumstances which the detectives have succeeded in spinning about him.

Attorney H. M. Smith, Jr., called upon the prisoner at the jail yesterday, but when queried last night as to whether he had been retained, stated that he had not. The attorney would not say at whose request he went to the jail. He also stated that he knew nothing about Dr. Johnson intending to make any statement.

FATHER HAS SMALL FARM IN MIDDLESEX COUNTY

The father of the accused young man is a farmer, residing somewhat more than a mile outside the village of Middlesex. He is the owner of a little farm of sixty-five acres, and owns a small home there. In the Johnson family there are eight children, all of whom live in the little country home of their father. Detective Willy stated yesterday that it is a higgledy structure of two stories, having but three rooms, and not at all in keeping with descriptions which, he added, the young student made at the Knight home. The detective stated that while the dentist was paying attention to Miss Knight he described his father's business as that of a country merchant with a trade to whose store countrymen came from miles about to deal; that they owned several automobiles and many horses. It was stated that the boy's father had one horse and a few head of stock.

The preliminary hearing in the case is set for January 3, but it is generally believed that this hearing will be waived and the case certified to the Hustings Court for jury trial. The event that the young dentist should make a statement confessing that he killed his wife, this would not interfere with making the plea of insanity, which has been suggested as the one on which he will rely. It has been intimated, however, that the young doctor may confront the State with a complete denial of everything, as the evidence which is now accumulated is of a circumstantial nature. The purchase of the cyanide need not be denied, as it is a chemical commonly used by his profession in cleaning instruments. He stated to students when

(Continued on Fifth Page.)

## WOULD REGULATE WAR CHARITY FUNDS

State Defense Council Calls for Supervision of Appeals Being Made to Public.

TOO MUCH IRRESPONSIBILITY

Laxity in Management of Many War Charities Opens Way to Waste and Fraud.

Among a great many matters considered by the State Council of Defense at its meeting at the Capitol yesterday morning and afternoon was a suggestion from the Council of National Defense at Washington, which the Virginia council unanimously approved, looking to some means whereby the solicitation of funds for war relief and other purposes may be regulated. It is contended that there is too much irresponsibility in the collection of funds and too much laxity in the management of funds when collected, under present conditions.

The statement from Washington, to which the Virginia council gave its endorsement, was as follows:

"The solicitation of funds for patriotic and philanthropic war purposes has increased to such an extent that it demands official supervision to prevent wastefulness, overlapping, duplication, or fraud. The Council of National Defense recommends that the State Councils of defense take active steps to supervise all such appeals to the public for money."

As a method to be adopted in the several States may vary, owing to local conditions, we feel that we can make no explicit recommendations. We call your attention, however, to the co-ordination of societies already accomplished by the State division of the woman's committee, whose co-operation in this work will be of undoubted value.

ALL ORGANIZATIONS MUST FILE FULL REPORTS

"We submit for your consideration suggestions as to the means by which this work may be accomplished: 1. Give the resolution of the Council of National Defense the widest publicity.

2. Call upon all such organizations within the State to report to the State Councils of defense details of the work showing: (a) How organized, and for what purpose; names of executive officers; whether regular meetings are held, and when; whether minutes of meetings are kept, and whether regular books of account are kept and audited. (b) A statement in reasonable detail of all moneys received and expended.

3. Determine therefrom such organizations as may be entitled to approval for properly conducting useful work which is not overlapping or duplicating the work of other similar organizations.

4. Require such report and showing to be given full and wide publicity.

5. Upon these requirements being complied with, and the showing made being satisfactory to the State Defense Councils, give such organization place upon a published list of those having the approval of the State Defense Council, and by it recommended to the public, thus permitting those so approved to be recommended to use upon their printed matter such wording as: 'Approved by the State Council of Defense.'

"The existence of this, if broadly advertised, will, we think, to a large extent solve the question of control, since any society that does not obtain such approval will find difficulty in securing contributions."

This whole subject will be carefully considered and perhaps a recommendation made to the Governor.

WILL CONTINUE IN OFFICE UNTIL NEW ARRANGEMENTS ARE MADE

Owing to the lateness of trains, members of the council were late in arriving at the Capitol, and the meeting did not start until nearly noon. Those present were General E. W. Nichols, of Lexington, chairman; former Senator George B. Kezler, of Keokuk; Bishop Collins Denny, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South; R. Walton Moore, of Fairfax; Dr. Emerson S. Williams, State Commissioner of Health; John H. Crowder, of Wytheville; United States District Attorney Richard Evelyn Byrd, James O. Winston, of Louisa; Colonel E. B. White, of Leesburg, and A. P. Walker, of Charlottesville.

Governor Stuart met with the council at the opening session, which was an executive one. The members discussed with the Governor the aims of the council and the work already done, and also plans for the immediate future. The Governor made confidential reference to certain matters connected with his views as to the council's work, and it was decided that the council continue as at present constituted, carrying on its advisory and publicity work as heretofore, until by legislative or executive mandate a change is effected. The council decided to make no specific recommendations to the Legislature on war measures at this time.

The council discussed a large number of routine matters and took up correspondence dealing with many questions affecting various industries and classes of people in Virginia relative to the war and its problems.

SERIOUS SHORTAGE OF DOCTORS IN VIRGINIA

Dr. Williams, in reporting for the medical section, asked for the careful consideration by the council, and for suggestions later on, as to the serious shortage of doctors in Virginia at this time. This fact is especially true of the rural districts; there is not much more shortage felt as yet in the

(Continued on Fifth Page.)

## TEUTON PEACE BID GETS DEFIANT "NO"

Hun Peace Proffer to Bolsheviks Not Acceptable to Entente Allies

(By Associated Press.)

Great Britain and France, respectively, through their Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, have made known to the world that the terms under which the Teutons seek a general peace are not sufficient. And backing their Prime Minister, the British plenipotentiary, represented by a national labor conference, has reaffirmed, without equivocation, that it is the determination of labor to continue the war in order hereafter to make the world safe for democracy.

Fortified by the known attitude of President Wilson as to the requirements of the United States if the war is to end and a peace concluded, the utterances of Premier Lloyd George and Foreign Minister Pichon and the almost unanimous sentiment of the British workers seemingly make certain that the Teutons' offer, proffered given in reply to the Russian Bolshevik proposals, will go for naught unless it is materially added to and brought into line with the demands that the United States and the entente allies have laid down as the concrete basis for the discussion of peace.

Nevertheless, the Bolshevik element in Russia apparently has not just heart that something may come from the Cernin peace conference, at which it was made, has taken a recess until January 4, and, meanwhile, Trotsky, the Bolshevik Foreign Minister, purposes to send a note to the entente allied embassies in an endeavor to have them participate in further peace parleys, and also is drafting a note to the people of the world.

Inside Russia the situation still remains obscure, owing to the various reports concerning the movements of the Bolshevik and counter-revolutionary forces. One of these reports is to the effect that an armistice between the Kaledines and Bolshevik troops has been effected at Rostov-on-Don, with a neutral zone between the fighting line, Kaledines and his Cossacks were among the first of the Russian counter-revolutionary forces to take up arms against the Bolsheviks.

On the fighting fronts Palestine again has come into a position of first importance, owing to the British having inflicted another severe defeat upon Turks near Jerusalem. North and Northwest of the holy city General Allenby's forces have made an advance of about two and one-half miles on a front of nine miles, after having repulsed a Turkish attack. The Turks suffered heavy casualties.

Artillery duels are in progress along the entire northern front in the Italian theater, the infantry of both sides apparently being inactive except for patrol encounters. Likewise, on the front in France, the artillery are doing the major portion of the fighting. The Germans have not offered battle to the French on the Verdun sector north of the Caennieres wood since Wednesday's sanguinary repulse. Snow and cold weather prevail over the entire line from Belgium to the Swiss border.

HOUSE TWELVE MEN IN A TENT

Major-Generals Greble and Wright Tell Senate Investigators of Conditions at Cantonnments.

WASHINGTON, December 28.—Disease epidemics and clothing and equipment shortages at Camp Bowie, Texas, and Camp Doniphan, Okla., were described to the Senate Military Committee by the respective commanders of those National Guard cantonnments, Major-Generals Greble and Wright.

Both officers said the epidemics at their posts now were under control, and that adequate supplies of overcoats had been received, but they gave dismal pictures of earlier conditions. They told, too, of enormous shortages of rifles, machine guns and other equipment still existing. Food has been plentiful, they said, and of good quality.

General Greble's story showed conditions at Camp Bowie to have been the worst. He declared the lives of many men who recently died there would have been saved had winter clothing, sufficient tents to avoid overcrowding and proper hospital facilities and sanitation been provided. He told how the War Department ordered twelve men housed in each tent, where, he said, they were "so thick you couldn't walk between them."

During November, General Greble said, 8,000 men, or about one-third of his command, passed through the hospital with deaths from pneumonia, measles and other diseases averaging sixteen daily. At one time 1,500 men, he stated, were crowded into a hospital built to accommodate 500, and that without a sewerage system.

EPIDEMICS BROKE OUT BEFORE RELIEF ARRIVED

In September, the general said, he protested against crowding twelve men into a tent and gave warning that sickness would result. Before more tents arrived, the epidemics broke out. Now, however, he added, there are only 800 men on the sick list.

During the hearing the committee also received from Secretary Baker a letter in reply to a resolution requesting immediate action to relieve clothing shortages in the cantonnments, stating that the necessary steps had been taken and that he would report fully as soon as all camps were heard from.

Each of the camps investigated to-day has about 25,000 men, with Missouri and Kansas national guardsmen largely composing the personnel at Camp Doniphan, and Texas and Oklahoma guardsmen at Camp Bowie. The health conditions at both were recently reported by Surgeon-General Gorgas, whom General Greble said to-day, had made a correct report of conditions at the Texas cantonment.

The two camp commanders were before the committee all day, testifying for three hours behind closed doors regarding conditions among General Pershing's forces, whom they recently inspected. They said General Pershing is short of no supplies except motor trucks.

## FRENCH ANSWER MADE BY PICHON BEFORE CHAMBER

His Clear-Cut Statement Thrills by Its Fearless Directness.

LLOYD GEORGE DISPELS ALL DOUBTS IN BRITAIN

Meanwhile, in Both Countries, Organized Labor Is in Momentous Conferences.

BEAR DIRECTLY ON WAR AIMS

Both Want Restatement of Purposes, but Indorse President Wilson's Recent Speech.

LONDON, December 28.—"No!" came the defiant echo from both Britain and France to the central powers' latest Christmas bid for peace.

Premier Lloyd George's reply, which came in the form of a letter to the labor conference now sitting, was indirect, but clear enough to dispel all doubts of Britain's resolve to fight to the finish until "the future freedom and peace of mankind" are achieved.

France, through her Foreign Minister, M. Pichon, gave a clear-cut, specific answer that thrilled the French chamber by its fearless directness. Never, said he, will France consent to a return to the status quo ante bellum. France has been suffering too much from the war. Above all, she must have Alsace-Lorraine back. Undeterred by Russia's defection, cheered by America's wholehearted aid, she will fight to the end. If the foe has any offers to make, let him do so directly, not through a Bolshevik back door. Such, in substance, was M. Pichon's reply to Count von Cernin's latest peace offer.

Meanwhile, both in Britain and in France, organized labor is assembled in momentous conferences bearing directly on allied war and peace aims. Both urged to-day an immediate explicit restatement of these aims. Both indorsed heartily President Wilson's war aims as set forth in his recent speech before Congress. The French labor congress at the same time approved of the aims enunciated by the Russian Socialists. It made no mention of Alsace-Lorraine, which M. Pichon reiterated to-day, is France's "raison d'etre" for peace.

GERMANY'S AUTOCRACY MUST YIELD TO DEMOCRACY

At the British labor congress, Arthur Henderson said:

"The allies must renounce their intention of creating an impenetrable barrier against the German people. Germany's autocracy must give place to democracy. Militarism must be universally discarded."

"Labor must demand a clarification of Britain's position if the war aims are called on for further sacrifices."

Thus, on the face of things, there appeared to be a divergence between Anglo-French labor and governments. But actually there is nothing in the situation that could give the central powers comfort, such as it may seem so on the surface.

"This does not mean the white feather," said Henderson, in the course of his speech. "British and French organized labor has no thought of playing the quitter. All it wants is a clear, specific statement of what will constitute victory. It feels that once this 'bill of particulars' has been set forth by the allied governments it will bring home with full force to the German people the transcendent fact that it is the crushing of militarism that the allies are fighting for, and not the crushing and dismemberment of the central powers as nations."

HOPEFUL HINT TO LABOR IN LLOYD GEORGE'S LETTER

In Lloyd George's letter to the British trades and labor union organization there was a hopeful hint that the allied governments fully realize the justice of labor's demand for a new confession of faith.

"The question of a fresh declaration of our war aims," wrote the Premier, "is constantly kept in view." He added, however, that "such a declaration will only be issued in agreement with our allies."

He continued: "The ideals for which we are now fighting are the same as when Great Britain entered the war."

"I have never been more convinced than now that the purpose of the allies is continuing the war are not imperialistic nor vindictive, but to achieve the future freedom and peace of mankind."

It was the demand for such a disavowal of aims of conquest that Henderson placed in the forefront of his address. He attacked Sir Edward Carson for "treating with scorn and contempt" the proposal for a league of nations, which Henderson added was "America's fighting inspiration" more than anything else.

Henderson deplored allied failure to deal with Austria-Hungary and Turkey in the same way as the Teutons are now dealing with Russia. Both these central allies, he added, "do not want to continue." He suggested that